

# It's Personal: A Video Discussion Guide on Bullying and Harassment in Construction

## About bullying and harassment

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Bullying and harassment poses a potential risk to the health and safety of workers — both emotionally and physically. Anyone can be the recipient of bullying and harassment, and that includes workers in the construction industry.

Before presenting these videos, familiarize yourself with other WorkSafeBC resources on bullying and harassment. A good place to start is the [Bullying & harassment page](#) on worksafebc.com. For additional information, read the WorkSafeBC publication *Toward a Respectful Workplace: A Handbook on Preventing and Addressing Workplace Bullying and Harassment*.

## Videos and discussion questions

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The following 10 videos focus on various aspects of bullying and harassment in the construction industry and its effects on both workers and employers.

 VIDEO [View video playlist](#)

Discussion questions for each video are designed to promote awareness of bullying and harassment by starting conversations between employers, supervisors, and workers. Ask viewers to keep the questions in mind as they watch the videos.

You may have a limited amount of time, or you may want to have one or two specific discussions within the larger topic of bullying and harassment. These videos run independently of each other and can be viewed selectively or in a sequence.

**It's Personal**  VIDEO (6 min 30 s)

This video weaves together stories from workers, supervisors, and leaders within the construction industry as they share their experiences and observations on bullying and harassment.

### Discussion questions

- Did the scenarios described in this video seem familiar? In what ways?
- What role do the witnesses and bystanders play in incidents like the ones in this video? If you witness bullying and harassment, what can you do to help?

### *When You're Targeted* VIDEO (2 min 58 s)

Workplace bullying and harassment presents a health and safety risk to all workers. It can take place anywhere and at any time, and anyone can be targeted. For a new or young worker, especially, starting a job on the right foot can already be stressful without unwanted attention from an alleged bully.

#### Discussion questions

- If you're comfortable with sharing, can you describe a time when you experienced bullying and harassment in the workplace?
- What action should you take when you believe a worker is being bullied?

### *Victims and Bullies* VIDEO (2 min 37 s)

When it comes to bullying and harassment, some individuals have experienced both sides of this behaviour. After they were bullied at work, they “paid it back” — intentionally or unintentionally — when a new person started. It's a negative pattern that may be repeated for many years if left unaddressed and unreported.

#### Discussion questions

- What are some reasons workers bully or harass other workers?
- What are some examples of bullying and harassing behaviours?

### *How It Feels* VIDEO (3 min 48 s)

Bullying and harassment can have severe physical and psychological consequences on those affected, causing anger, loneliness, confusion, depression, and — in some cases — suicidal thoughts or actions. Those who experience bullying and harassment may feel like there's no one to turn to for help.

#### Discussion questions

- If you're comfortable with sharing, describe how it felt when you were bullied or harassed in the workplace. What actions did you take in response?
- How should bullying and harassment be reported in your workplace?

### *Chased Away* VIDEO (1 min 42 s)

Employers also feel the negative impacts of bullying and harassment in their workplaces. The losses attributed to bullying and harassment can be difficult to measure if the behaviour is not identified. These losses can include lower productivity, increased absenteeism, and higher staff turnover.

#### Discussion questions

- What are some signs that could help an employer identify bullying and harassment in their workplace?
- Who is ultimately responsible for putting an end to bullying and harassment?

### *When Women Are Targeted* VIDEO (2 min 32 s)

Women are entering the construction trades in increasing numbers. They're working beside men in what was historically a male-dominated industry. This has resulted in instances where professional lines are crossed, making women in the industry more vulnerable to bullying and harassment.

#### Discussion questions

- What can be done to improve general attitudes toward women in trades?
- What does respectful treatment look like in your workplace?

### *Effect on Safety* VIDEO (1 min 39 s)

Construction sites contain many hazards that can change from day to day. In order to stay safe, workers must stay alert and remain aware of their surroundings at all times. When a worker's mental state is affected by bullying and harassment, personal attention to safety is diminished and can result in workplace accidents and injuries.

#### Discussion questions

- What are some effects of bullying and harassment on a worker? On a bystander? To the workplace?
- What steps should you take if you or a co-worker shows signs of being distracted on the job?

### *I Was a Bully* VIDEO (3 min 26 s)

Good leaders recognize that yelling and other forms of verbal abuse directed at workers are both inappropriate and ineffective. Not only are these behaviours demeaning, but they may be seen by workers as unspoken approval to communicate with each other in the same way.

#### Discussion questions

- Have you ever found yourself engaging in bullying and harassment on the job? If you're comfortable with sharing, describe what happened, the reasons behind it, and what you learned from the experience.
- What kinds of behaviours would not be considered bullying and harassment?

### *Be the Change* VIDEO (1 min 43 s)

It's important for everyone in a workplace to create a positive culture of health and safety. Putting an end to bullying and harassment begins with committed leaders from all levels of an organization who confront and change negative behaviours.

#### Discussion questions

- How can workers help to create or maintain a positive safety culture?
- What changes would you like to see made to leadership behaviours in your workplace?

## How Does It Stop? VIDEO (3 min 21 s)

In order for bullying and harassment to end, employers, supervisors, and workers need to take action. Employers and supervisors should make sure that workers feel valued for the work they do. And workers need to understand that their own job satisfaction is largely dependent on the relationships they build with their co-workers. To that end, mentorship programs — where experienced workers train new workers — are useful and build positive relationships.

### Discussion questions

- How can mentorship programs help stop bullying and harassment in the construction industry?
- What kinds of formal or informal mentorship programs currently operate in your workplace?

To view more videos on bullying and harassment in construction, go to [worksafebc.com](https://worksafebc.com).